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C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 005183

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STATE FOR NEA/ARP, NEA/ARN

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TAGS: PREL KU IZ JO

SUBJECT: (U) JORDAN'S KING ABDULLAH VISITS KUWAIT

Classified By: CDA Frank C. Urbancic for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (SBU) Summary: Jordan's King Abdullah II paid a brief visit to Kuwait on November 11, meeting with the Amir, Crown Prince and PM Shaykh Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah. During his two-hour stay, the King discussed the current situation in Iraq, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and Jordan's bilateral relationship with Kuwait. He also took the opportunity to personally thank the GOK for the fuel Kuwait has supplied Jordan since March. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) Jordanian King Abdullah II used his two-hour November 11th visit to Kuwait to reaffirm the strong ties between Kuwait and Jordan, according to the Jordanian Embassy in Kuwait and local Kuwaiti dailies. During an interview with Kuwaiti Arabic daily al-Rai al-Aam, the King expressed his views on the future of US forces in Iraq. "The Americans are pushing ahead with their project in Iraq. They can't leave without a strong Iraqi government and authority being formed, chosen by the Iraqi people," he said. King Abdullah also predicted that a federal system of government in Iraq would end in failure, "especially if it were built on a sectarian and ethnic basis."

¶3. (C) Calling the King's visit "normal," the Jordanian Embassy in Kuwait told Poloff that the visit focused on coordinating the shared policy positions of the GOK and Jordan vis-a-vis Palestine and Iraq. In addition, the Embassy confirmed that King Abdullah had extended his thanks to Kuwait for its provision of fuel throughout Operation Iraqi Freedom. The Embassy could not confirm if King Abdullah had requested that Kuwait continue this supply of fuel.

¶4. (C) Comment: Jordan enjoys stronger relations with Kuwait today than at any other time since the first Gulf War. Despite residual bitterness among many Kuwaitis over Jordan's support for Saddam Hussein during that conflict, Kuwaiti FM Shaykh Dr. Mohammed Sabah al-Salem al-Sabah frequently consults Jordanian FM Marwan Muasher on matters of shared concern, and King Abdullah II is personally popular with Kuwaitis, unlike his late father.

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